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To: All Medicaid Pharmacies, Physicians, FQHC's, Rural Health Clinics, Optometrists, Nurse Practitioners, Nursing Homes and Dentists

Dispense as Written Override

Effective May 1, 2008, the Alabama Medicaid Agency will require an override for a brand name drug with an exact generic equivalent submitted with a Dispense as Written (DAW) code of 1.

Currently, a pharmacist submitting a DAW code of 1 requires brand medically necessary (BMN) certification written on the face of the prescription in the physician's own handwriting. Beginning May 1, 2008, for a brand name drug that has an exact generic equivalent to be approved, the provider must request an override that documents medical necessity for the need of the brand rather than the available generic equivalent. This override applies to those instances where the prescriber has written a prescription for a brand name drug when a pharmaceutically and therapeutically equivalent drug product is available generically.

For approval, a Pharmacy Override Request Form 409 along with a Food and Drug Administration (FDA) MedWatch Form 3500 must be submitted including the clinical basis for the reason the generic equivalent is not clinically appropriate. Completed MedWatch forms will be forwarded to the FDA to report issues relating to the quality, authenticity, performance, or safety of the medication. A provider's unwillingness to complete a form or a patient's unwillingness to take generic drugs do not constitute appropriate clinical basis. Overrides may be approved for up to 12 months; renewals will not require an additional FDA MedWatch form to be submitted. Excluded from this process are carbamazepine, levothyroxine, phenytoin, and warfarin products. Override forms and more information on criteria can be found on the Medicaid website at www.medicaid.alabama.gov; click on Programs / Pharmacy Services / Override Criteria and Forms.

Override request forms can be faxed or mailed to:

Health Information Designs (HID)
Medicaid Pharmacy Administrative Services
P.O. Box 3210
Auburn, AL 36832-3210
Fax: 1-800-748-0116
Phone: 1-800-748-0130

Providers with policy questions concerning the DAW override may contact:

Alabama Medicaid Agency
Pharmacy Services Division
P.O. Box 5624
Montgomery, Alabama 36103-5624
(334) 242-5050

April 1, 2008